

differences in the State. Several reforms had to be carried out to eliminate such differences. Particular communities tried to please or threaten the Government in view to their self-aggrandisement. The Government should not sympathise with such communities. A Government which was influenced by threats had no place in the world.

The time had come for changing the system of administration. The people would not be satisfied with the existing form of government carried on by four or five people instead of by a single individual. The member's prayer was therefore not for an Executive Council consisting of a few such members, but for a Council composed of members who would be responsible to the people and who held office only so long as they enjoyed their confidence. Before forming such a Council, the Legislative Council and the Assembly should be reformed and made more popular by broadening the franchise. A non-official committee should be appointed to suggest measures of reform. The member wished the Dewan to be the President of the proposed Council. Greater attention should be paid to the encouragement of vernacular education and more importance should be assigned to the mother-tongue. Travancoreans should be made to realise the advantages of responsible government; and the member hoped that the Dewan, with his experience in Great Britain, would do all he could to achieve that object thereby putting an end to communal differences, unemployment and other evils and promoting the peace and prosperity of the State.

193. Creation of an Executive Council.

MR. NARAYANA PILLAI RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI (*Member, Kottayam taluk, Group II*) said that all forms of government were established with a view to the promotion of the prosperity of the majority of the people. The goal of all such governments was the peace and prosperity of the States governed. Since the close of the late European War, there was a growing feeling among the people that they should also have a share in the burden of administration. It was as a direct consequence of such feeling that several popular institutions were established in several parts of India. A Legislative Council with a non-official majority was similarly established in Travancore. But the whole duties connected with the administration of the State devolved on a single individual, the Dewan. In the majority of cases, the Dewans were foreigners who were not acquainted with local conditions and who had no special interest in the prosperity of Travancoreans. There was no continuity of policy in any branch of administration. It was necessary that the Dewan should be helped in his functions and his actions controlled by an Executive Council responsible to the Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

As regards the creation of such a Council, there was a feeling among the authorities that, during the period of the Regency, no measures affecting the form of administration should be introduced. But the member was of the view that Her Highness the Maharani Regent had full power to inaugurate any such reform. An Executive Council would only add to the facility of administration, besides conferring a lasting benefit on the people. He was aware that the Dewan was sympathetic to the proposal. A single Dewan, even though he be an extraordinary man, could not find the time and convenience to bestow adequate thought on large administrative questions, besides doing his routine work. There were more than 20 departments controlled by him and he had daily to decide not a few questions connected with those departments. Even minor questions of detail had to be brought to his notice. If an Executive Council was created, many of those matters could be entrusted to its members and the Dewan would find ample time to devote to larger questions of policy and administration.

The evils resulting from the absence of such a council were not few. The Government could not adopt a fixed policy in any branch of administration. The Government was carried on according to the whims and fancies of the Dewan. The measures inaugurated by one Dewan were overthrown by another. The losses that were caused to the people and the State on account of such frequent changes of administrative measures could easily be imagined. There was no fixed principle in regard to the appointment and promotion of officers in the public service. The

attention of the Government had not been pointedly drawn to the irregularities in the matter of appointments and promotions made by officers just previous to their retirement. The Trivandrum water supply scheme had been engaging the attention of the Government for a long time past, but it had not yet materialised. A huge sum had already been spent on the investigation of the scheme. All the above were due to not following up the policy of one Dewan by his successors and the inability of a single individual to devote adequate attention to all departments. The Dewan had to take up the responsibility for the faults committed by the Heads of Departments. The officers themselves had no time to look into details. They were not responsible to the people and did not enjoy the confidence of the latter. The only way to get over the difficulties pointed out was the creation of an Executive Council responsible to the Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. The people were not a little benefited by the commutation of the *Kandukrishi* rent into money payments. They were also glad of the proposed railway extension to the Trivandrum town. Side by side with such benefits, they also wished to have an Executive Council during the term of office of the existing Dewan so that his name might be fondly cherished by the coming generations.

DEWAN: Mr. Ramakrishna Pillai, I have already made a few observations on the subject: some want responsible Government, some an Executive Council to cure every conceivable sort of evil that may possibly exist or come into being hereafter in Travancore; or else to put some sort of curb upon the activities of the Dewan or even sympathetically to accord him some relief. I do not propose to say very much more upon the subject now. I have practically exhausted all that I had to say on a similar representation last year and on a similar representation earlier in the day to-day. I said once before, the time is not opportune for the establishment of Responsible Government or of an Executive Council; of a Government responsible to an Assembly or a Legislative Council and ultimately responsible to an electorate. For the immediate present, you have to take things as you find them. There are considerations and factors which have a very important bearing upon this proposal of yours which preclude the possibility of the question being taken up for immediate settlement.

194. Reform of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly.

MR. P. MADHAVAN VAIDYAN (*Member, Nominated*) spoke about the need for reforming the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. He said that, for the first session of the Assembly, the Government themselves nominated the members while, from the second session onwards, the people were allowed to return the members; but the franchise was given only to those who were paying a land tax of Rs 50. People who paid a land tax of Rs. 50 were the rich men in Travancore, so that the Assembly might be fitly called the Assembly of the "lords" and not the "Popular" Assembly. In spite of this, there was a feeling gaining ground that the Assembly was an ineffective body when compared with the Legislative Council. It was necessary to dispel that feeling by reforming the Assembly in a suitable manner. The age of the Assembly was 23, the average age of an Indian. It was regrettable that, during the space of a generation, the Assembly had remained as it was first organised, although the Legislative Council was reorganised twice during the same period and the franchise for the latter was also revised thrice. The power of election to the Council was first given to the members of the Assembly, then to those who were paying a land tax of Rs. 10 and still later to those who were paying a tax of Rs. 5. But the franchise for the Assembly had remained the same ever since its inauguration. The need for amending the Assembly Rules was first given expression to by the previous Dewan, Dewan Bahadur Mr. Raghaviah, in his first opening address to the Assembly. A set of draft rules was prepared and published in the *Gazette*, but nothing further was done. There was a certain section of the people who advocated the abolition of the Assembly. But the member pleaded that an institution associated with the name of His Highness the late Maha Raja should not be accorded such a treatment. In British India, there was more than one body entrusted with the administration of the country such as the Legislative Assembly, the Council of State, and the Executive Council. Even though Travancore did not possess as many representative bodies as British India, at least the two existing Houses should be continued and the Assembly reformed without further delay.